

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Orange	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Chapel of the Cross

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
304 East Franklin Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Chapel Hill (Fourth Congressional District, The Hon. Nick Galifianakis)

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37 COUNTY: Orange CODE: 135

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Vestry of Chapel of the Cross

STREET AND NUMBER:
304 East Franklin Street

CITY OR TOWN: Chapel Hill STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Orange County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Hillsborough STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Building Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1962 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:
East Capitol and Independence Avenue, S. E.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. CODE: 11

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Chapel of the Cross, a Gothic Revival parish church constructed of red brick, was described by Thomas Waterman as one of the finest of the unpretentious Gothic churches in North Carolina. The edifice with its gable roof is dominated by a crenellated entrance tower which rises in three stages. Lancet windows with two trefoil-headed panels united by a quatrefoil in the point of the arch flank the entrance tower, completing the three-bay main facade. Similar lancets pierce each of the four side bays, which are divided by stepped buttresses with sloping weatherings. The low water table of the brick foundation is marked by a ledge approximately one foot from the ground level.

The double door of the main entrance, each leaf of which contains a long panel headed by a round trifoliated arch, is recessed within a shallow Tudor arch with paneled soffits. Above the arch is a crocketed wooden ogee hoodmold. In the second stage of the tower is a large lancet window composed, like those of the nave, of leaded amber glass overlaid by false wooden Decorated tracery and outlined with a brick label. A band of four mortar quatrefoils divides the second stage from the third, which contains on each face a louvered rectangular opening, with a square brick label. Trefoil tracery divides each opening into a pair of lancets. The polygonal turrets at each corner of the tower are buttressed at the base and terminate in blunt octagonal projections. The tower crenellation is outlined with brick coping and further emphasized by the double brick string course beneath. Along the sides of the chapel, the coped battlements conceal the composition-shingled roof. The original rear wall no longer exists, for a chancel and vestry were added in the late nineteenth century.

The interior, a simple center aisle in plan, has undergone several renovations although its simple austerity, characterized by the uniformly white plaster walls and somber woodwork, has remained unchanged. The small bare vestibule in the tower opens into the nave through an arched entrance containing double doors, each leaf of which contains two panels, with smaller corresponding panels filling the transom above. In the nave the restored flooring is of oak, and the ceiling is covered with a sheathing of plain pine boards. At the head of the eight rows of pews on either side of the center aisle is a solid paneled railing. The choir stalls are placed on a raised platform in front of the chancel. Lecterns flanking the center aisle stand on the platform. The upper portion of the right lectern is a beautifully carved wooden eagle whose base bears the inscription "In Memoriam . . . Mary Ruffin Smith . . . 1888." According to its plaque, the wood-paneled organ case in the southeast corner, with hand-painted floral motifs ornamenting the organ pipes, was given by the Sunday school soon after 1908 in memory of the Reverend William Meade. The wide windows, with pale colored glass, set in deeply splayed reveals, create a light-filled interior. The gallery across the rear of the nave, supported by two Doric columns of solid pine, is reached by a stairway in the northeast corner under the gallery. The stair, which rises in a single flight after a quarter turn at the base, is open-string but is enclosed by the boarded balustrade with diamond-shaped openings and turned newel posts. The gallery railing, with solid paneling accented by recessed quatrefoils

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beneath a molded handrail, appears to be the result of a recent renovation. Large plastered posts to either side of the main entrance, which seem to be later additions, function as gallery supports. The doorway in the northeast corner, leading to the cloistered arcade, was added when a new larger chapel was constructed. The original lighting fixtures have been removed, and four electrified glass lanterns now hang from the nave ceiling.

A plaque on the northwest wall of the chapel records that the chancel and vestry were added in 1890. The rectangular chancel is separated from the sanctuary by a shallow arch; and the vestry is entered through a small doorway to the right of the chancel, enframed by a colorful wooden crocketed ogee hoodmold like that over the main entrance. A rectangular leaded window in each of the side chancel walls connects the chancel with both the vestry and the southeast sacristy. Four small arched windows containing colorful stained glass are located high on the rear chancel wall. The gabled chancel ceiling is covered with narrow diagonal boarding. The chancel furnishings are of recent vintage. The vestry retains its original interior, having a corner fireplace with a plain mantel, paneled wainscot, and built-in cupboards.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1843-1848

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The first Episcopal Church structure in the Chapel Hill area was a small chapel located at a crossroads sometime before 1792. It was called New Hope Chapel, and the place-name New Hope Chapel (abbreviated to Chapel Hill) was given to the town laid out there in 1793. Here the earliest adherents to the Anglican faith were served by an itinerant Scots clergyman, Dr. George Micklejohn. Though he was something of an eccentric, he nevertheless enjoyed the respect of his parishioners and ultimately was elected president of the first diocesan convention held in North Carolina.

During the period of the Revolution, the Anglican Church had waned because of its connection with England, and it was not until 1824 that it was revitalized in Orange County with the formation of St. Matthew's Parish in Hillsborough, eleven miles north of Chapel Hill. Its first rector was William Mercer Green, the man who was later chiefly responsible for the building of Chapel of the Cross.

In 1837 Green was elected chaplain of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a position which carried with it a professorship of belles lettres. In the course of his duties in the community, various difficulties of a sectarian nature convinced him to organize formally an Episcopal congregation in the village.

Green began holding services in a private home, and in 1841 he reported to the church convention that nearly thirty persons were ready to be formed into a congregation and that a fourth of the money necessary to build a house of worship could be raised. On May 13, 1842, a congregation of the members of the Episcopal Church was organized, which included a number of distinguished professors in the university. At the convention of 1842, Green reported there were fifteen communicants and that a "pleasant, spacious and convenient lot" had been purchased from the university. Besides the purchase of a lot for a church building, a contract for part of the building materials was also let at this time. In June, 1843, building actually began. In spite of financial and other difficulties the church was three-fourths completed by May, 1844. Then for a time building slowed. Bishop Ives remarked after a visit there,

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When I observed around me a large congregation crowded together in a most inconvenient manner in a private home, numbers for want of room having been forced away, and recollected that within two or three hundred yards there stood a beautiful Gothic edifice, which a few hundred dollars would open to the wants of the people, I felt mortified and humbled for our spiritual indifference.

During the long period of building, Professor Green assisted in many ways. One way in which he helped was by supplying brick made in a kiln on his property. It is recorded that once, in reverence for the Sabbath, he had the kiln fires put out at twelve o'clock Saturday night. An estimated \$250 worth of brick was ironically lost by this pious observance of sacred law due to premature cooling of the kiln. Professor Green, who had continued in his capacity as the university chaplain, was encouraged by the receipt of additional money for the church in 1846, but it was not until the fall of 1848 that it was completed. On August 23, 1848, Lucy M. Battle wrote from Chapel Hill to her husband, William H. Battle (professor of law),

The E. Church seems to be nearly finished--the pews are in-- the railing is up around the altar tis plaister'd &c -- & I cannot see why we cannot go there soon to worship. Tis a sweet looking place I assure you.

On October 19, 1848, Bishop Ives consecrated the church, which he called the "Chapel of the Holy Cross," and in January the Reverend Aaron F. Olmsted took charge as the first rector.

Although it is known that the Chapel of the Cross was built through the efforts and under the leadership of William Mercer Green, the church founder, the actual authorship of the design remains a matter of conjecture, for the extant church records make no mention of an architect. The church was long attributed to Richard Upjohn, who designed Christ Church in nearby Raleigh. This tradition was reinforced by Hobart Upjohn, grandson of the famous architect, who designed the new Chapel of the Cross and believed it likely that his ancestor was responsible for the original chapel. Church historian, Archibald Henderson, however, concluded that the chapel is identical to the design represented in Nos. 29, 30, and 31 of Plates XI and XII of Bishop John Henry Hopkins's Essay on Gothic Architecture, with various plans and drawings . . ., published in Burlington, Vermont in 1836. Francis L. Hawks, an amateur architect and grandson of the famous John Hawks, who designed Tryon Palace, was a close friend of Green, and Henderson suggested the possibility of Hawks's influence in the choice of design.

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Blackwell Robinson, author of The North Carolina Guide, named the Philadelphia architect Thomas U. Walter as the designer of the Chapel of the Cross. A slightly earlier church in Wilmington, North Carolina, St. James Church of 1837, is also attributed to Walter by both Robinson and Thomas Waterman. Comparison of these two churches reveals that with a few minor exceptions, such as the main entrance and the pinnacles of the tower of St. James, the structures are nearly identical, although St. James, built by a large wealthy parish, is a much larger and more elaborate building.

In an informal letter of November 28, 1843, concerning the possible future employment of the well-known New York architect, Alexander Jackson Davis, on an unnamed campus project (presumably the enlargement of Old East and Old West), David L. Swain, president of the University of North Carolina, remarked that the appearance of Chapel Hill was improving, for among other recent construction "the Episcopalians have erected the walls (brick) of a very neat church planned by Mr. Walter of Philadelphia." Swain believed that the architectural development of the university and the village were contingent upon one another, and under his guidance the first attempt at the comprehensive beautification of the buildings and grounds were made. It is well-documented that Walter, one of the most important American architects of the nineteenth century, noted particularly for the classical structures he designed in Washington while serving as government architect from 1861 to 1876, designed structures in North and South Carolina. It is therefore possible that he was responsible for the design of the Chapel of the Cross; Swain's letter remains the primary evidence for this attribution. Walter published several architectural pattern books, however, and the church may well have been built not after a plan commissioned directly from Walter, but from one of these standard church designs. In either case, the Chapel of the Cross stands as a Gothic monument worthy of this noted designer.

Largely through efforts of an energetic rector, the Reverend Homer Worthington Starr, a new rectory and parish house were added to the church in 1911. A new church, the design of Hobart Upjohn, was built on the lot in 1925. This structure was made possible by a generous gift of Mr. William A. Erwin of Durham. It is joined to the Chapel of the Cross by a cloister which binds the two buildings into a single complex.

The Chapel of the Cross is a distinctive example of the mature Gothic parish church revival, employing playful Tudor forms but retaining its quiet dignity. Shaded by magnolia and crepe myrtle trees, the chapel, which is still as Mrs. Battle said at its completion, "a sweet looking place," is one of the most picturesque landmarks of Chapel Hill. It also recalls the much earlier Anglican chapel that gave the village its name.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Battle, Lucy. Letter to W. H. Battle, from the Battle Family Papers in the Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Henderson, Archibald. Story and Pageant: The Church of the Atonement and the Chapel of the Cross at Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Hartford, Connecticut: Church Missions Publishing Company, 1938.

Robinson, Blackwell. North Carolina Guide. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1955.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES							
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE							
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds			
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	35°	54'	58"	79°	02'	39"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1½ Acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Survey and Planning Unit Staff, John B. Wells, III, Supervisor

ORGANIZATION: State Department of Archives and History DATE: 2 November 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name H. G. Jones

Title Director, State Department of Archives and History

Date 2 November 1971

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Swain, David L. Letter to Charles Manly, November 28, 1843, from the University Papers in the Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Waterman, Thomas T., and Johnston, Frances B. The Early Architecture of North Carolina. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1947.

Withey, Henry F., and Rathburn, L. C. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased. Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, 1970.

Chapel of the Cross
304 East Franklin Street
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

State Highway Commission
Scale: $\frac{1}{2}$ " / 1 mile
January 1, 1962
Longitude
degrees minutes seconds
79° 02' 39"

Latitude
degrees minutes seconds
35° 54' 58"



